

# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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VOL. I.

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NO. 1.

In presenting our readers with the first number of the *Messenger*, some explanation of its intended course may be requisite, and doubtless will be expected by our patrons. We are not, however, over partial to multiplied professions on these occasions, for all decisions on the merit of new works, must eventually be based upon their general character, as it is from time to time developed, and shall therefore simply give our intentions, in our new undertaking, with some of our reasons therefor, leaving the issue, as of necessity we must do, to the future.

It is our purpose then, to have the *Messenger* consist of occasional interesting and original sermons—brief expositions and illustrations of passages of scripture—moral tales and essays, exhibiting the peacefulness of wisdom's ways, and the odiousness of its opposite, vice—miscellaneous reading of chaste and moral tendency—occasional essays or comments, involving the principles of religious and civil liberty, and such a weekly record of events as may be deemed of interest to the liberal christian and philanthropist.

In its sectarian character it will advocate the doctrine of God's unchanging goodness, and the final in-gathering of all mankind, through Jesus Christ, to a state of holiness and happiness. Believing that a dogmatical, over-bearing course, or an undue share of irony and sarcasm, is not calculated to produce conviction on the minds of reasonable and reflecting persons, and withal is totally inconsistent with our profession, we shall endeavor to mark out the opposite, to let it speak forth the sentiments and feelings of the Christian Universalist—"peace on earth, and good will towards men," as children of one universal family—to inspire confidence in our common parent, that we may love and obey him, "because he first loved us," and however we may fail to convince, let our weekly message be of such a character, that even opposers may award us candour and sincerity in our course. We cannot, it is true, in all cases, answer for the precise course of correspondents. Style and expressions many times differ, with equally pure purposes, and we should not be disposed to judge them too severely, or dictate them too closely; yet we could wish them to conform, as far as possible, to our plan and purpose in the publication. We may, also, ourselves, at times, be regarded severe and would thus early bespeak the kind charities and forbearance of our readers. Whatever may be inferred from our manner, we pledge them our motives shall be good. In any seeming departure from the line of Christian charity, we shall be actuated much by the same feeling, with which a surgeon would commence an important operation, knowing that it might inflict momentary pain, but believing it would eventuate in permanent good, and that the circumstances of the case, absolutely required its accomplishment.

It will also be our aim to make it a faithful watchman on the ramparts of Religion, and as a necessary consequence, civil liberty—for one cannot long exist without the other—to examine fearlessly, though in all due charity, the various measures, deemed inimical to the inherent rights and privileges of mankind, which are now in operation in the religious world, and which are daily and hourly originating, and overspreading this fair country, with a rapidity scarcely equalled by the winged tribe, in their visitation on ancient Egypt. And to this end, we solicit from our friends and correspondents, brief and comprehensive communications. The nature of our work, will require writers to be as concise as possible, that we may afford due variety in our columns.

In this department of our paper, also, we may use all plainness of speech, but we shall in like manner as with the former, endeavor to do it in candour and sincerity—to appeal to the reason and understanding of our readers, rather than to denounce.

It is very probable we shall be branded, by a portion of community, as enemies to all Religion, as opposers of the best interests of society. We have been before, and have no reason to expect less in our new capacity. Our opinions, however, are equally dear to ourselves, as those of our opposers can possibly be to them, and it is one of the peculiar features of our excellent form of government, that opinions and measures can be canvassed freely. A perpetuation of these rights and privileges to all, is our highest wish and ambition. We have honest feelings of alarm, for the safety of our civil and religious liberties, and we know that many within these United States are no less apprehensive. To all appearances, however, thousands are resting securely in their own strength and in the supposed impregnable fortress around them, but are liable, we conceive, to be surprised like the sentinel slumbering at his post. We doubt not, for a moment, ourselves, there is virtue enough in the country to guide her destinies safely and securely. But of what service is it, unless called into action in the hour of peril. The tempest driven bark may bear able and experienced mariners, but what availeth all this, provided their energies and decision are not promptly directed to her salvation. We may mistake the "signs of the times," but if so, it is an error of judgment, not of intention. Actions and words both demonstrate most conclusively, in our estimation, that principles and measures are abroad in our country, totally repugnant to the spirit of republicanism, and the rights of conscience. A combination more extensive or dangerous, we are constrained to believe, never marked the dark ages of the world, than is now secretly at work throughout this boasted land of religious liberty. Many we

know, cry *peace, peace*, but we most devoutly hope, they may never awake to a situation in which they dare not raise any other cry. This combination may not be characterized so openly by force as in former times, and in other countries, but it is no less sure. It is uniform in its course and subtle in its character—invasades the social and business relations of life, applies itself at once to the most dangerous feelings and passions of our nature, our vanity and our interest, and induces us to close our eyes to reason and reflection; to move blindly down the current of popular favor, and barter every principle of integrity in matters of opinion, for the sorry purpose of promoting our temporal interest, and obtaining the momentary applause and respect of popular religionists of the day; and when man ceases to reason and reflect on matters of faith and opinion, that moment he becomes the veriest slave in existence. It commences by flattering our vanity, in extolling our acquirements, pressing us forward into more public situations, courting our society, so long as there is the least possibility of operating on our feelings, when, perhaps, under other circumstances, we should be treated with contempt, or neglect to say the least—artfully favoring our business, urging upon us the importance of securing the good opinion and respect of this and that class of community, and how much they are interested for us, until the head has emphatically become giddy with imaginary ideas of our own importance, and our golden prospects for the future. By these means many, very many, are drawn into the net. Should this, forsooth, fail in general success, more forcible measures must be adopted—we must be admonished of the danger to our interest and our reputations in refusing compliance, and if we are still firm, all intercourse must be suspended, and all business withdrawn, and the most abusive slanders resorted to, to destroy our business and our reputations. Thus are we compelled to a hypocritical profession, or must patiently witness the daily sustenance taken from our own mouths, and those of our wives and our children, under the specious pretence of promoting religion. Were the consequences confined to ourselves, individually, the honest convictions of our minds, would nerve us against great and serious privations. But who, that is worthy of them, can look on an affectionate companion, and the interesting pledges of their union, and see "haggard want" approaching, with no power of averting it, save by debasing himself in his own mind, and in the eye of Heaven, and remain unmoved. The very thought, will almost drive him to madness, and then he becomes a fit subject to mould into the popular professions of the day, like clay in the hands of the potter, though too frequently moulded to dishonor. Are these views too severe; let him who yet dares to think,



look abroad and see whether his own daily experience does not furnish the evidence of their truth. We think the proof abundant, and in the conduct of our work, our exertions, however humble, will be directed to an honest exposition of the baneful influence of these measures on the interest of society. We regard the present as an important period, one requiring energy and decision on the part of liberal christians. To Universalists, however, in our present undertaking, we more immediately appeal. The utility of a well conducted paper, in so important a location as this city, must be apparent to them. How far we shall be able to sustain that reputation, for the one now commenced, the future, alone, must determine; we hope, nevertheless, every one favorable to its general objects, will give it countenance and support under the experiment, at least. On their interest and exertion in its favor, (whatever may be its merit) much of its success will depend. In our arrangements we have been desirous to adopt every measure calculated to insure its *permanency*, and with the hearty co-operation of our friends, and the assistance pledged to its columns, we confidently trust in its ultimate success. Of its necessity, there can not be a moment's doubt. There is not, perhaps, a town or village, of any importance, within the sphere of its probable circulation, or indeed within these United States, in which there is not, at this time in particular, settled and systematic operations against the doctrine of Universal benevolence—every measure taken to oppose it and render it as odious in the public mind as possible. And how are these evils to be obviated; our preachers are limited in number, but a small proportion of community can be accommodated with public and stated exhibitions of its doctrines and precepts, even if they are disposed to hear. Our main reliance, therefore, for the present, in explaining and enforcing them, and in repelling calumnies against them, must be in respectable *periodical preachers*.

To our friends in the city, and indeed in the different sections of the country, who have so kindly and ably assisted us in our commencement, with their exertions, we tender our heartfelt thanks—in it we think we discover an earnest of future friendship and support, and we most earnestly desire they may never have occasion, from us, to regret the intercourse now forming between us.

It is not probable, we shall very frequently intrude upon their attention, our own observations, as our time will necessarily be taken up, in a good degree, with its general selection, arrangement, and its business part; and to enable us to give the requisite attention to this department, we have associated with us, in the editorial labors, our Br. T. J. SAWYER, whose reputation and standing in the ministry, we doubt not, will insure him a friendly reception with our readers. It will be his purpose to assist generally, but more particularly to take charge of the original editorial department. We may occasionally, ourselves, as opportunity offers, sit down to a friendly communication with the reader, in the spirit of brotherly love and charity, though our object in the publication, is not so much to dispense our own individual views, as it is to fur-

nish a respectable medium, through which others, more talented, may communicate theirs.

With these general explanations of our views, we submit our work to the public, earnestly desiring the influences of that wisdom which is from above, to assist us in guiding it through its perilous voyage, to the haven of usefulness and success.

P. PRICE.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

#### A SHORT SERMON.

*"In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive."* Matt. xiii. 14.

That faith, or a belief of the truth, as contained in the gospel of Christ, is the effect of the understanding being enlightened, is not only a reasonable conclusion, but is unquestionably the doctrine of the scriptures. Even the mode of expression is sanctioned in the scriptures, and we are not left to suppose a case, and then argue its truth or probability, from analogy, implication, &c. The understanding may be defined, to be a mental capacity to *perceive and estimate*. In perfect congruity with this definition, is the declaration of the record, "To depart from evil is understanding." A metonymical expression signifying, that those who understand the *nature and consequences* of evil, will depart from it. And it is equally true, that those who understand the truth, will prize it; and the estimation in which they hold the truth, will be in an exact ratio with their understanding of it. The declaration, "My people do not know,"—Israel doth not consider," shows the cause of the difficulty to consist in the party spoken of not understanding. It being impossible for any person to consider, or estimate any thing they have no knowledge of. The pre-eminent qualifications of the man Christ Jesus, were enumerated by the prophet, who alluded to him as God's servant or agent, as follows: "A spirit of wisdom and understanding; a spirit of counsel and might; a spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord."

The declaration of Christ, in reference to the stupidity of the Jews, places the subject in a clear light; for he declares, positively, that when they should hear, they should not understand; and when they should see, they should not perceive. Although the mode of expression appears hyperbolic at first sight, it is only a strong declaration of the gross stupidity of those spoken of. It almost amounts to this, that the Jews were so blinded by their attachment to their opinions, that that evidence which to people who had eyes and ears, or the faculty of seeing and hearing, would prove absolutely irresistible, would convey to them no information whatever. They should *hear*, but should understand nothing they heard; they should *see*, but the object they saw should make no impression on their faculties of perception. A most deplorable state and condition of ignorance; and passing belief in our day, were it not a fact that even now, some who are not judicially blinded Jews, are almost as stupid and blind.

The manner of orthodox blundering, and mistaking, may be described as follows:

First:—They see without discerning.

Second:—They argue without discriminating.

Third:—They conclude without reasoning.

Fourth:—The result of the whole is, they have no premises for their conclusions.

A brief statement of the prominent features of the creed of the modern orthodox, who claim to be the only correct religionists in the world, and the only people who are in the road to Heaven, will help the illustration of this subject.

Orthodoxy teaches, that all mankind deserve the endless wrath and curse of the Deity; the number who shall be saved, deserve an endless hell;—and those who are reprobated deserve an

endless hell. Now, in the judgment of reason and common sense, one part of mankind, according to orthodoxy, receive their *just* deserts; and the other part who deserve hell, escape in a mysterious manner to heaven. It is a great *mystery*, say the orthodox, a great mystery; and if God should deal with the whole world of mankind according to their deserts, and the strict letter of his justice, all would be damned forever. And the orthodox can see the justice of all this; and the harmony, and beauty of all this; and all this is a great *mystery* too; but, can they discern what they pretend to see?

There is nothing deserving the name of *argument*, except that logical deduction which shall be as palpable to the senses as the result of the application of the multiplication table. Men grossly deceive themselves when they pretend to see things they cannot discern; and things too, which they cannot discern, nor any one else: for the reason that no such thing has any existence. Twice two make four. This is a palpable truth; and the argument that because twice two make four, two hundred times two will amount to four hundred, is logical, and comports with common sense, the special gift of God, to enable man to act like a reasonable creature, and to keep out of fire and water, etc. The moment a man passes the threshold and enters the temple of orthodoxy, he disencumbers himself of common sense. If he did not, common sense would disqualify him from seeing without discerning; arguing without discriminating; concluding without reasoning, and, consequently, drawing conclusions without any premises.

I contend that the same rule, the same argument, the same reason, the same sense or capacity, which decides that because twice two make four, you may go on in the same ratio of progression *ad infinitum*, and the result will be true and correct; must also decide, that if all mankind deserve an endless hell, and God's justice demands their subjection to it, one half or any number of mankind will never escape it, and in a *mysterious* manner and way get to Heaven; and all this be just, and right, and plain, and beautiful. Truth is truth—reason is reason—sense is sense, whether the subject be the amount of a leg of mutton which weighs ten pounds, at six pence a pound, or whether the value of the creation of God, and all the souls which he has made, be the subject of inquiry; and the same God who has given man a sense and ability to estimate the value of little things has given him ability to estimate the value of great things. God, therefore, is the giver, and man the recipient; and I must conclude, that if the reason which will decide correctly in arithmetical science, will lead a man astray on other subjects, that it is a fallacy, and man a dupe.

Now to the point. When a man sees that two and two make four, he discerns what he sees. When a man argues that, because two and two make four, twice four make eight, he discriminates; he concludes agreeably to the sound dictates of reason and common sense; and he has palpable premises to his conclusion. You may extend the principles of the science to measure the space of the orbits of all the planets in the solar regions; to weigh the mountains in a balance, and number the particles of matter throughout the wide expanse of universal existence, and the simple fact developed by the least exercise of reason and rule, must accompany the whole progress, and, finally, be the criterion or test of the whole amount, and the guide throughout the whole investigation.

Reason is the test of truth. When Christ placed a little child in the midst of his disciples and said, you must become *like this little child*, he spoke volumes in favor of reason, and against that jargon, or pious nonsense, which distinguished the Jews of old, and characterises the professors in modern times. The little child



must grow into a different opinion from the reasoning of innocence, before it can choose the bitter and refuse the sweet; and call light darkness, and darkness light.

It has become fashionable among the rigidly orthodox to denounce reason, as a *carnal* quality; and to decide in opposition to the dictates of reason, according to the pretended spiritual but mystical whim of the party. They conclude without reasoning; and their conclusions are as much opposed to reason, as a computation of numbers would be opposed to arithmetical correctness, which should be made without any regard to that science. The doctrine of a *Trinity* of persons in *one* being, each person possessing and exercising all the attributes of individuality and perfection, and at the same time conjointly constituting only *one* individual being, is at the top of the heap of all absurdities which have ever been heard, or preached, or sung. A man must see this monstrous hypothesis without discerning; he must argue its truth without discriminating; and conclude in its favor without reasoning; for reason is at war with every thing that is unreasonable.

If an objector shall say, that it is *human* reason that is opposed, and that divine reason is in perfect harmony with this orthodox absurdity, then I say, that there is only one kind of reason in the Universe, which I will characterize as *the* reason that is based on truth. Reason is as much reason, so far as the *quality* of the attribute is in question, whether it be exercised in the mind of the great Creator, or in the mind of the humblest of his creation; for the conclusive argument that God is the author, or giver. So fire is as much fire, whether it exist only in the quantity of the smallest atom which chemical ingenuity can comprehend, or whether it burns and rages to the size of an orthodox hell.

As the subject is one of more than ordinary importance, I will illustrate and substantiate the truth of it, by an appeal to the sacred record, and quote a case in point. "Let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he [Christ] is righteous." 1 John iii, 7. As if John had said, There is only one kind of righteousness in the Universe, whether it be exercised by Christ, or by God, or by man. Now this position, or truth can be seen; and the man who sees it discerns what he sees. He can argue the truth of it, and discriminate; and he comes to his conclusion hand in hand with reason. The exhortation is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in Heaven is perfect." There is not one kind of perfection for God, and another kind for man; and the same may be asserted of every principle in goodness, and every attribute of wisdom.

That I may not be misunderstood by the most superficial reader, I will strive to make the subject so plain, that even he who runs may read and understand. Remember, it is not the *quantity*, the extent, but the *quality* of the principle. There can only be love, and its opposite, hatred, in the Universe; for a medium between the two principles must be an indifference which would amount to a negative of every thing, and therefore is a nonentity. There may be degrees of love, as to quantity or extent, but there cannot be degrees as to the quality of the principle itself; for "love thinketh no ill," or no evil; and this is its sole and peculiar characteristic by which it is designated and defined. While on the other hand, hatred thinketh (that is, meaneth or intendeth) no good. This characteristic is as infallable as the other, and neither can ever fail.

Reader, this is reason, let us try it still farther, and see if we can discern any thing. Apply it to the science of geometry. Conceive a globe the size of the vast solar region, and a globule of blood or vital humor, which circulates in the veins of the smallest insect, and is the size of either an argument for or against its shape?

That which is round is round, whether its magnitude be extended beyond the reach of human intellect to explore, or whether its size be diminished till it escape the scrutiny of the microscope. The same of love; love is love, whether it be viewed glowing in the bosom of the tigress towards her young, or burning in the seraph before the throne of God. The same of hatred, whether it breathes in a smothered and restrained revenge, or, in the beauty of orthodox benevolence, consigns myriads of helpless creatures to an endless, an eternal hell.

O! ye orthodox. How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity; and scorners delight in scorning; and fools hate knowledge! H. F.

#### FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Messrs. EDITORS.—Among the various charges alleged against Universalists by those who seem to arrogate to themselves most of the wisdom and piety of the land, that of infidelity often stands conspicuous. Yes, it is gravely asserted that we do not believe the bible. Now this charge really appears silly to us, though we are sensible that as far as they may succeed in fixing such an impression on the public mind, they do us an essential injury. We apprehend that they have been somewhat unfortunate in uttering this cry against us, for if they will only examine the subject with more close attention to all the facts in the case, they will perceive that the reason of our differing from them in religious opinion, is not because we believe *less*, but because we believe *more*, than themselves; that is, on the supposition that theirs is the correct faith, we believe *too much*. While they zealously contend that Jesus Christ will save only a part of the human race, we, with equal zeal, (and permit us to add, with equal sincerity,) contend that he will not lay aside his mediatorial office, until he has put down all opposition to God—until he shall have caused every son and daughter of Adam to perceive so much loveliness in virtue, as to make it their deliberate and unceasing choice. Now every thinking, unprejudiced person, must see at a glance, that, if we can maintain these desirable sentiments, by a fair and candid interpretation of the sacred volume, the charge of infidelity, so far from applying to us, does, with much greater propriety, attach itself to our accusers.

If, however, our religious opposers mean to say, that we have no belief whatever in Divine Revelation, and that we have taken upon ourselves the name of Universalists, merely as a convenient cover of our secret infidelity; duty, in such a case, will compel us to say that they are slanderers, and to repel even the insinuation of such an idea with scorn and indignation. Who constituted them judges of our hearts? Who gave them authority to strip every man of the christian name, who has the independence to differ from them in the interpretation of the bible? We have reason to bless God, that people are beginning to appreciate such arrogant pretensions, according to their real character.

The leaders, in the abominable crusade which has been carried off against Universalism, since the days of the venerable Murray, have obviously one principal object in view, and that is, the security of their aggrandizement, by frightening the timid from an examination of the arguments which we offer in proof of our doctrine, and by heaping upon the preachers of our denomination, almost every opprobrious epithet, especially where the prejudices of the community will countenance such illiberal conduct. Examine the tracts, which those who are compassing sea and land to make proselytes, send forth against Universalism, and you will generally find them filled with scurrility and low invective—with strange and improbable stories of a Mr. A. and a Mr. B's. having professed Universalism for many years while in health and prosperity, and of their having renounced it, when they supposed

themselves drawing near the close of their earthly existence. But in the judgment of men who are capable of weighing evidence, or who are competent of judging of what is relevant or irrelevant as proof of any given proposition, such stories, even allowing them to be *correct*, (which by the way we think is very doubtful indeed) would by no means prove the falsity of the doctrine we maintain. What if a man who may have had some indistinct views of the universal goodness of God, and at the same time so unfortunate as to have a wife and children violently opposed to this rational and scriptural sentiment—what, I say, if such a man, after having his mind enfeebled by a lingering and painful disease, should yield to the importunities of some officious Clergyman, and the no less earnest entreaties of the members of his own family, and renounce his faith, would it establish the horrid doctrine of endless misery? No; and those who retail these stories in tracts are culpably ignorant, if they do not know that such silly tales furnish no proof of their doctrine. Allow that there is any force in such arguments, and I will prove that every Protestant is a heretic. For there have been instances in which Protestants have returned to the communion of the Mother Church, even on their dying beds. Now these tract venders would pity the weakness of a Catholic, who should urge these facts as a reason why *they* should give in their adhesion to the Roman see, yet they have the effrontery to palm such sophistry on the community as sound argument against Universalism. We would make a distinction, however, between those who are *leaders* in the war against our sentiments and their *dupes*. There are, doubtless, many of the latter class who are honest and conscientious in their opposition, and we would always treat the objections of such minds with candid and respectful attention. These persons suppose that we disbelieve the threatenings contained in God's word; that we *absolutely reject* so much of the Bible as threatens sinners with punishment. Now, if this paper should chance to be read by any persons of the above description, we would distinctly inform them, in order to correct their mistake, that there is no sect of Christians which believes as firmly or as consistently in the full execution of the Divine threatenings, as the denomination of Universalists.

Let it be remembered that the believers in endless misery, generally represent the affairs of the moral world as being left at loose ends, in this state of existence—that so far as respects the present life, righteousness is attended with far more misery than sin. Indeed, they often speak of sin, as yielding its votaries much enjoyment, and some have gone so far as to say that they would allow themselves in an unrestrained indulgence of iniquity, were it not for a dreadful reckoning hereafter. At the same time they hold, that if the sinner repent but one moment before the breath escapes his nostrils, he will avoid all danger of future condemnation. Now, suppose a man should believe this, who is as desirous of enjoying *present happiness*, as he is anxious of making sure of *eternal felicity*—what course of conduct, think you, would he adopt? Would he not by all means avoid the inconveniences which he has connected with a life of righteousness, and devote himself perseveringly to a course of sin, and carefully defer his repentance to the latest possible period of his existence?

According to modern orthodoxy, a man who should live and die in this way, would escape all punishment, and therefore the threatenings of the Almighty to such a person would prove a mere nullity. But according to the views which Universalists maintain in relation to the moral government of God, there is no means of escape from the punishment due to transgression. For we believe with the Bible saints, that sinners are snared in the work of their own hands, and that their sins execute the penalties of that holy and



righteous law which they have violated. "He that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no respect of persons" with God.

Messrs. Editors, should you consider these desultory hints worthy a place in your paper, it is very probable you may hear from me again.

T. F. K.

Portsmouth, N. H. Oct. 1831.

#### FROM THE BOSTON TRUMPET. FOUR DAYS' MEETINGS.

What we ourselves might say of four days' meetings, would probably have little effect on those who have patronized and approved them. Some have attempted to propagate the opinion, that none but Universalists, and persons of a similar faith, were opposed to these meetings. To convince them that the truly wise and sober part of all denominations are opposed to them, and are capable of giving good reasons against them too, we call their attention to the following letter from an orthodox clergyman at the south, directed to the editor of the Boston Telegraph, one of the most orthodox publications, from which we extracted the long series of objections to Universalism to which we replied of late in our columns:

"These protracted meetings serve to break down the distinction between the Sabbath and the business of the week. Doubtless the attempts of the Roman Catholics to convert the days of the week into Sabbaths, has greatly contributed to bring the true Sabbath into neglect and contempt. And it is more than possible, that the multiplication of days for public worship will have the same tendency. I fear that many of the warmest advocates for these protracted meetings, do even now think more highly of the four days which they have set apart for public worship, than of that one day in seven which God has sanctified.

"These protracted meetings have a tendency to counteract the design of a preached gospel. They are intended by their partisans to be considered not as ordinary, but as extra-ordinary seasons; as furnishing such means of grace as cannot be enjoyed under the ordinary preaching of the gospel. They have, therefore, a direct tendency to lead congregations to undervalue the ordinary preaching of the word, and to fix their hearts almost exclusively upon such extraordinary seasons, as a harvest of spiritual good to their souls. Ordinary sermons must be lightly appreciated. I might have said, that this will be the case with sermons whether ordinary or extraordinary. For in order to support these protracted meetings, light must be converted into heat, and sermons into mere declamation. It will not do for ministers to study the truth, or for the people to reflect. It would kill such excitements as depend merely upon four days' meetings.

I am opposed to four days' meetings because I think they have a tendency to multiply spurious conversions. It is not denied that genuine conversions have been occasioned by them. Doubtless genuine conversions have taken place at Methodist Camp meetings. And yet I am opposed to them, because I believe that more good can be done in a way productive of less evil. I have no doubt that such meetings as serve to excite the passions without enlightening the understanding, are eminently calculated to produce false hopes. And these I consider imminently dangerous to those who embrace them, as well as to the spiritual interests of the churches which are so deceived by them as to admit into their fold wolves in sheep's clothing.

I am opposed to protracted meetings, because I think they lead to a substitute of human inventions for the divinely appointed duties of human life. We have no right to substitute even one duty for another. We must not substitute secret duties

for public, nor public duties for secret. We must not substitute either secret or public duties for social, nor social duties for these. Every duty is to be performed in its proper place. Now if it is wrong to substitute one duty for another duty, it is more so to substitute human inventions for the duties of divine appointment. To induce men to do this has been the policy of the devil in every age of the world. In this respect, he has been remarkably successful in the Roman Catholic Church. For the Christian ministry, the Catholics have substituted an ecclesiastical hierarchy. For holy time, they have substituted a multitude of holy days. For the two Christian sacraments, they have substituted seven of their own invention. For the reading of the scriptures they have substituted the dogmas of the pope, and the traditions of the church. For the worship of God they have substituted the worship of images and the invocation of saints and angels. For repentance, they have substituted penance, and for hell, a purgatory. I do not mean to compare the friends of the new measures to Roman Catholics. But I do think that four days' meetings, especially as connected with the new measures, are, to a certain extent, a substitute of human inventions, for the duties of divine appointment. I believe it is utterly impossible for a whole congregation to attend meeting four or five days in succession, without neglecting some of the positive duties of life. TIMOTHEUS."

On the same subject the editor of the Telegraph himself remarks as follows:—

"Now it is candidly our opinion, that, although protracted religious meetings may be productive of some good, yet they are not of divine appointment, and, in their final results, will be the occasion of a paramount degree of evil. This being our opinion, what is our duty? Can we consistently be silent? If we have real objections to four days' meetings, can we be faithful to what we deem the cause of truth, and yet not state these objections? If others think differently from us, they have an equal right, with us, to give their sentiments to the world. They do, indeed, give their sentiments to the world; and who complains of them for so doing? But, if our objections against protracted meetings and the new measures are not valid, they can be refuted; and if what we have published as facts, in "Letters from the West," are not true, they can be contradicted. Let the advocates of these meetings and these measures, then, come out, openly, and honorably and fairly, and meet us either in facts, arguments, or scripture testimony."

The editor of the Vermont Chronicle, a paper approved by all the orthodox party, speaks of the following great faults at four days' meetings:

"1. Confidence in the meeting, the arrangements, the ministers, the efforts, instead of confidence in God.

"2. Reliance upon plans, contrivance, adaption, &c. instead of truth.

"3. Having more confidence in our own talk than in the spirit of God.

"4. To the telling of stories which teach nothing. One half, perhaps, of the audience will not believe your facts to be facts, and you sink in their estimation by telling them.

"5. Trying to make people weep. Rum drinkers, when alarmed, are very apt to weep, but are seldom truly converted.

"6. Talking about the amount of feeling, the glorious season, and the awful season, and this interesting age. If you wish people to repent, talk of things which are unseen."

This we should think might be enough to convince all reasonable people, that the judicious of all denominations are sincerely opposed to these four days' meetings.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.  
"Wine is madness, and strong drink a mocker." SOLOMON.

Sons of Pleasure! nobly freed  
From the rules of virtue's creed,  
'Tis for you I strike the lyre,  
Well repaid if you admire.  
Fill the goblet! quaff it up!  
Pleasure's hidden in the cup,  
Coy she may be, like the fair,  
But 'tis said that Pleasure's there.

All the joys of social life,  
Smiling children, home, and wife,  
Early hours to rest and rise,  
Converse with the good and wise,  
Wisdom's rich exhaustless store  
Of modern and of ancient lore—  
These are joys beneath your care,  
Seek the wine-cup—Pleasure's there.

The heart at ease—the cheek of health—  
The noble god-like power which wealth  
Upon Benevolence bestows,  
To ease and lessen others' woes—  
To tread the path a Howard trod,  
Admir'd of man, belov'd of God—  
These are joys beneath your care,  
Seek the wine-cup—Pleasure's there.

Think you that my muse doth feign,  
Or speaks but in a mocking strain—  
Let me then that thought remove,  
And all I have asserted prove—  
Prove beyond a shade of doubt,  
How truly reeling madmen shout,  
That in the wine-cup, sparkling fair,  
Pleasure is—and only there.

Have you woes like these in life—  
A weeping, broken hearted wife,  
Watching, anxious, while you roam,  
And vainly for your coming home;  
Is a sickly infant press'd  
To that wretched mother's breast—  
Cease to think, and cease to care,  
Seek the wine-cup—Pleasure's there.

Drain it deep—nay, deeper yet!  
Wife, child, and home—you'll all forget—  
Then you'll laugh, and roar and sing,  
Whilst the bitter tear-drops wring  
From the heart, and through the eye  
Of her who sobs a lullaby.  
To her pining infant care,  
Drain deep the wine-cup—Pleasure's there.

Have you other troubles yet?  
Are you poor—and deep in debt?  
Have you, with your squandered wealth,  
Thrown away the jewel Health?  
Do you in your pathway find  
Doctors, duns, and death behind?  
Still would you defy dull care,  
Seek the wine-cup—Pleasure's there.

Pleasure! aye—whilst you can keep  
Reason—Conscience—both asleep;  
But I shudder for your sake,  
In that hour when they shall wake:  
Then the brimming cup in vain,  
Madly deeply you may drain—  
Pleasure is no longer there—  
But Horror, Frenzy, and Despair. W.

We have not for some time, says the Trumpet, seen a more pertinent truth, more pertinently illustrated, than the following: "A French priest, of some humor says—When the celebrated Burdelone preached at Rouen, the tradesmen forsook their shops, lawyers their clients, and physicians their sick; but when I preached the next year, I set all to rights again—every man minded his own business."



## CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1831.

\* \* *To our Patrons.*—The second number of our paper will be issued on Saturday, November 12, and after that period it will be issued regularly every Saturday. We adopt this course, to enable us to get out of Press, and distribute the extensive Edition we are publishing of the first number—to receive returns from subscribers, and obtain exchange Papers, &c. We wish, if possible, to make the publication *permanent*, and an extensive circulation of the first number is requisite to make known its objects, which will, of course, require extra time in the distribution. Such as design taking it, will consequently oblige us by as early returns as possible, within the time named, if any way convenient. Our second number, therefore, Patrons will bear in mind, will not appear until Saturday, November 12, passing one week.

In assuming a part of the important duties and responsibilities appertaining to the editorial office of a religious journal, the subscriber is fully sensible of the labors his task imposes, and of the difficulties with which its execution will necessarily be attended. An acquaintance with himself, and the recollection of inexperience render him diffident of his abilities either to meet the wants of the public, or answer the expectations of the patrons. Still he is aware that expressions of modesty and self-distrust often savor more strongly than silence, of confidence and vanity, so that while he indulges his own feelings of apprehension, he will most fully pledge himself to use every exertion that a deep and increasing love of the cause in which he is engaged can prompt to make the Messenger both interesting and useful, and worthy of a liberal and extending patronage.

In thus introducing myself to our readers, it may be expected that I should offer in a measure my individual views, and to an extent, mark out the course I intend to pursue in the share of editorial labors more particularly assigned me. Here however I find myself happily anticipated in the preliminary remarks of my associate given on another page; and I scarcely need observe that a similarity of views relative to the most politic mode of conducting our journal, and a general harmony of religious sentiment, fortunately exists between us.

Let me repeat then that it will be our endeavor to render the Christian Messenger what its name purports, a messenger of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our chief aim will be to present, illustrate and enforce its high and holy doctrines, and to urge home to the heart the pure moral precepts it enjoins—to make, as far as we are able, our fellow men, feel the inspiring relations they sustain to their Father in heaven and to one another, and to prompt them to corresponding action—to beget or confirm in their hearts the pure faith of our religion “that works by love,” and to awaken those hopes, that transcending every earthly object lay hold on heaven and immortality. We would, if possible, be instrumen-

tal in making men Christians, in leading them to Jesus as “the Saviour of the world,” and through him to the blessed “Father of the spirits of all flesh.” We desire to extend, in a humble degree at least, our views of the character of God, for on him are suspended all our hopes for the future, not to say all our present happiness. We acknowledge frankly that we love Universalism; and who that has ever felt its joys can do otherwise? We expect, we ask for no better faith. It embraces all that the most benevolent feelings of the Christian heart could prompt him to desire; and we turn with delight, from the hopelessness of the sceptic, and the scarce less satisfactory expectations of the limitarian, to the glorious prospects held out by our own faith, so cheering to man and so worthy the character of God.

Unpopular as our faith now is, calumniated and abused, we entertain no doubts of its final triumph. We believe there is a mightiness in simple truth that must ultimately overcome every obstacle which passion or prejudice may raise to retard its progress. We believe there is a divine power accompanying the religion of Jesus Christ, which notwithstanding human depravity and human pride, will win its way silently to the heart, and there bring forth its fruits of righteousness and peace. This brings us to remark that we believe this religion will prove most successful when presented in its native simplicity and loveliness, embalmed in its own pure spirit of *charity*. It cannot be decorated with asperity and sarcasm. For ourselves we desire to recommend it to all, and we sincerely pray that we may always manifest its spirit.

In doing this however we shall make no compromise with error either in opinion or practice. We shall not close our lips while we hear the character of our Father and our God traduced, however loud may be the professions of his traducers, either of reverence to Him or love to his children. Nor shall we sit in silence while we observe in our community practices inconsistent with the principles of our religion. We are aware that in reprobating, as we must, the measures adopted by several sects of limitarians, to create fanatical excitements, and produce what are falsely called revivals of religion, we shall expose ourselves to the odium and settled displeasure of the leaders and their adherents, in these scenes of infatuation. Be it so. We are no enemies of the religion of Jesus, but we are conscientiously and vitally opposed to that which too often passes for religion. We love the Gospel and shall endeavor to defend it, as well against its pretended friends, as its avowed enemies. We trust then that while we listen to the teachings of the Christian religion we shall not be wanting in our exertions to propagate its doctrines, diffuse its hopes, or manifest its spirit.

Our editorial brethren will receive the assurance of our warmest attachment, and we hope that on entering the field of their labors, the unbroken friendship, hitherto existing between us, will suffer no abatement. We shall look to them and others of the ministry for countenance and encouragement, while with unwavering confidence in God we commend ourselves and our labors to

him who is able to bless. And may he in his own good time glorify himself on the earth by a universal diffusion of truth and virtue and peace.

THOMAS J. SAWYER.

We take the liberty of forwarding the present number of our paper to numerous persons, both in the city and country, who have not yet signified their intention of taking it, but who are supposed to be friendly to its general object. If it meets their approbation, we shall be particularly gratified in receiving their names, and in any exertion on their part in making it known, and procuring other subscriptions among their acquaintances. Our friends in the city, particularly, are earnestly solicited to continue the same liberal exertions, which they have already made towards it. We feel under obligation for what they *have* already done, and it will not be lessened by what they *may still do*. Numbers may be sought out in their different circles of acquaintance, who might not otherwise know the publication, or be known to the publisher, for a considerable time. We are desirous it should go out under the full sanction and countenance of the friends of the cause it espouses, and our utmost exertions will be directed to rendering it worthy of their confidence and support. An extensive list of subscribers will be necessary, to make it of any object in a pecuniary point of view. The requisite arrangements, however, are made for completing *one volume* at least, which we shall do faithfully and punctually, if life and health are spared. After that period, its continuance must depend on the degree of interest we are enabled to give it, and the liberality of our friends in patronizing it. We would particularly desire those who intend taking it, to forward their names as speedily as possible, that we may be able to regulate our edition in the commencement, as nearly as possible to the probable demand for it. It would also be well for our friends out of the city to depute some one to forward the names, where two or more design taking it in any one place. P.

## ORTHODOX.

Several considerations have induced the editors to refrain altogether from using this word as the distinctive name of any of the popular sects of Christians in our country. We shall observe this rule,

First: Because the term is properly an adjective and not a noun, but more especially because it would signify, was it a noun, “one who possesses a *sound faith*, or believes in the *genuine doctrines* of the scriptures.” Such a word therefore we cannot conscientiously appropriate to those who, we sincerely think, have made very wide departures from *sound faith* and the *genuine doctrines* of Revelation.

Second: Because the word conveys a different meaning in almost every country and often in every age. Thus the Roman Catholic is orthodox in Italy, or Spain, the Greek in Russia, the Episcopalian in England, and perhaps the Presbyterian in the United States. In other words the prevailing sect arrogates to itself the imposing appellation of *orthodox*. That this word is constantly changing its signification is



evident from the fact that Arminianism which fifty years ago was the rankest heresy, is now sound orthodoxy, and Calvinism that was then looked upon as the very essence of religious truth without which there could be no salvation, is now but a word, the merest shadow of its former self and ready to be abandoned by its own advocates.

Third: Because the term is not used with sufficient definiteness by Universalists. Sometimes it embraces all who believe in endless misery, and sometimes only the dominant sect or the leading party in our religious community.

Fourth: Because we are sensible the word is so much hackneyed that many Christians of other denominations feel that we use it rather in reproach or derision than sincerity or complaisance. We shall therefore adopt for ourselves, and would recommend to our correspondents, a term which certainly can give offence to no one, and which plainly presents the ground of difference between Universalists and others. We are so called because we believe in the eventual salvation of all men. Those who reject this opinion and believe in only a partial salvation are our religious opponents and we shall call them *limitarians*. This name we think appropriate, and it possesses none of the odium which attaches to *orthodox*. If any one believes in a limited salvation he certainly cannot take umbrage that we should call him a *limitarian*. Let things go by their right names but do not let us quarrel about words. We are *Universalists* and are proud of so honorable an appellation. S.

#### THE JUST METHOD OF ARGUMENT.

We have often, or rather always, observed a singular assumption of privilege made in the debate between the Limitarian and the Universalist, by the believer in endless misery. It is such as ought never to be allowed: a parallel can scarcely be found in the whole history of logical discussion. The attributes of the Deity form the basis of all Christian doctrines. Any doctrine, therefore, which does not flow from these attributes, or at least any doctrine which is in opposition to these attributes, ought to be supposed false, and never admitted until proved true. Now what are the attributes of Jehovah? Omnipotence, Wisdom, Goodness. Justice and mercy, are only modifications of goodness manifested in the moral administration of the Divine government. Was not God just, he must cease to be good or wise; as that parent who should refrain from inflicting the needed chastisement upon a refractory child, ought never to be thought a truly good parent, and certainly has no claim to the character of a wise one.

And what might we naturally expect from the operation of infinite goodness, guided by unerring wisdom, and sustained and rendered efficient by Almighty power? Could we reasonably expect the endless misery of a large part of the intelligent creation? As well might we expect midnight darkness and wintry frosts from the full beams of a mid-day summer sun. But the doctrine of Universal salvation rises naturally from the acknowledged attributes of God. This then is plainly the doctrine which without any farther evidence we are bound to suppose true, until it is proved false. It stands on clear and eligible ground. When we acknowledge the Deity possessed of goodness, wisdom and power in the highest degree, we equally acknowledge the doctrine of the ultimate happiness of all mankind; because these attributes in their natural operation will, (unless other circumstances intervene

which we have not taken into the account) as certainly lead to that result as they exist.

Now the Universalist has a right by all the rules of honorable debate, to say that his peculiar doctrine is true; and his opponent may, if he can, show it to be false. But is this the method of modern discussion? By no means. Our Limitarian friends claim the privilege of assuming the doctrine of endless misery true, with all its horror—with all its unreasonableness—with all its opposition to the divine character. But this is not the worst of the case. Having assumed the doctrine itself, they are ready to assume proofs of it likewise. Here they are at no loss, as they deem it necessary only to quote a passage of scripture, without even thinking it of the least importance to show that the passage has any reference to the subject.

The doctrine of Universal Salvation would seem to require but comparatively little proof, since it is, in itself, so perfectly consistent with the acknowledged attributes of God. Not so, however, with endless misery. Its proof should be abundant, unquestionable. Suppose of a parent who has ever enjoyed the enviable reputation of being a judicious and affectionate father, we should hear that he had made some signal display of his love and kindness to his whole family. We should be predisposed to believe the report, because it is what we might naturally expect from his well known character. We should scarcely ask for accumulated evidence of the fact. Even slight proof would be satisfactory. But suppose, instead of this honorable report, we should be told that this father had bestowed every blessing in his power on one half of his children, and had actually put the remainder to death by the most lingering tortures. Could we believe the shocking story without the most unquestionable evidence? Should we not doubt and hesitate before we gave it a moment's credence? Should we not still hope for better things, even as the proofs thicken around us? And could we give it implicit faith, until every material circumstance in the whole transaction had been clearly proved by abundant and satisfactory evidence? This, however, is but a poor illustration of the subject under consideration, because while all men are evil, God is only good, and while they are every day changing, God is immutable.

Ought not our Limitarian friends then, under such circumstances, to feel themselves under some obligations to do more than merely refer us to a few passages of Scripture? Ought they not to take especial pains to prove in the first place that these scriptures do apply to the subject of endless misery? Of what avail is it to tell us, that "except we repent we shall all likewise perish," unless it is shown at the same time that the word *perish* does here really mean to *suffer endless misery*? And so with every passage introduced to support that doctrine.

We are fully aware that the method generally pursued by Limitarians, answers their expectations. They do not hope to affect the most intelligent and reflecting. The ignorant are ready to believe the doctrine of endless misery as plainly taught in the word of God as it is preached by the professed minister of the Gospel. Nor do they seem to doubt that every passage quoted to prove that doctrine was pruned by the sacred writer for that very purpose. S.

*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. Eph. iv, 31, 32.*

When we look abroad into the world, and witness the daily exhibition of the waywardness of man—the bickerings, contentions and strife by which his course is characterised, the heart almost sickens at the picture, and we involuntarily respond to the prophet's declaration, every im-

agination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually." In almost every situation and every pursuit of life, we find the same domineering, captious spirit—the same disposition to lord it over each other. Even the professor of religion, the mild doctrine of which, as revealed in the scriptures, only breathe peace and good will, is not exempt from its influence. Here it would seem we might reasonably look for a different influence—a unanimity of feeling and purpose, a kindness one toward another—a charitable, forgiving disposition, alone worthy the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. In the varied business of life, and in the prosecution of political purposes, where the mind is naturally engrossed with the cares, perplexities and selfishness of the world, these consequences are not so surprising, though unjustifiable under any circumstances. But when we see those who profess to have come out from the world—to have enlisted under the banners of the Cross, and zealous in their claim to the Christian name and character, indulging in bitterness, wrath, evil-speaking and uncharitableness towards their fellows, we are constrained to apply to them the rebuke of our Saviour to his disciples, "ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." They indeed have a form of Godliness, but in conduct deny the power thereof. Whoever does not acknowledge precisely their views and conceptions, or whatever principles do not precisely accord with their profession, must be slandered and denounced—the persons held up to derision, and their profession to contempt. There are exceptions we know. We occasionally meet those, under various names and professions, who give evidence of the love of God being shed abroad in their heart, by their conduct towards their fellow men. But it is a lamentable truth, that mankind at the present day are prone to judge of their fellows, more from *profession* than by *practice*. These things ought not so to be; for "by their fruits ye shall know them," is the only scriptural text. We are led more immediately to these observations, from having recently attended a lecture of the Rev. Joel Parker, at the Presbyterian Meeting house in Norwalk, Conn. The meeting was held on Tuesday evening. The Sabbath previous, notice was given from the pulpit that he would preach on that evening against the doctrine of Universal salvation, and expose in all its deformity, the fallacy of that abominable heresy. As we are ever disposed "to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," we had a curiosity to hear the arguments that might be adduced, and accordingly attended the Lecture. From the "note of preparation," we certainly had reason to expect a logical and candid examination of the subject; but we must say, we were totally disappointed—disappointed at the ignorance or misrepresentation manifested by the speaker, of the subject on which he was engaged—disgusted with the shallow sophistry throughout, and the illiberal, unchristian and proscriptive spirit exhibited towards those he was opposing. He commenced by introducing alleged arguments of Universalists, which we have never heard advanced, particularly in the unconnected and disjointed manner in which he presented them, and after his man of straw was prepared, he would commence an Indian system of bush fighting in knocking him over. We do not recollect a single instance in which he took a position definitely and argumentatively against the opposing arguments, though they were of his own preparing; but throughout, conducted his remarks in this vague and indefinite manner:—"If such is the case, how dare you reason thus and so!?" For instance, "If God subjects mankind to suffering here, how dare you presume he may not make them suffer endlessly?"—without any examination of its relative bearing, or the least argument to show that man would thus suffer. Our concern, however, at this time, is not so particularly



with the pretended arguments, as with the *spirit* exhibited on the occasion. After going through with what, by some, perhaps, was considered sound reasoning, he pointed out that which he alleged to be the almost invariable rule or process by which Universalists arrived at their sentiments. They first apostatized from the *true church*—gradually lent themselves to strong drink, until they became confirmed DRUNKARDS—then LIARS—then THIEVES—then UNIVERSALISTS. He had first laid it down as an *invariable* rule. But on reflection observed to this effect: “*I don't know but this may be too severe—there may be exceptions—I think I have known one man who appeared to be honest and sincere; but my brethren, these exceptions are VERY RARE!*” What a beautiful exhibition of Christian charity—how admirably it accords with the charge of the Apostle to Timothy—“*Preach the word, &c.—reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine;*” or with the injunction, “*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.*” He then went on to exhort his hearers to avoid Universalists—to have no argument with them—never to allow themselves to go to their meetings, &c. They might be proof against the allurements for once, but it was no sign they would be the second time. Many, of perhaps equally strong minds, had been inveigled away to the destruction of all hope. “*Why, my brethren, I never allow myself for a moment, to dispute or converse with them on the subject.*” And the beauty and consistency of these remarks is exhibited in the fact, that he took for his text the following:—“*And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*” Reader, whoever thou art, just for one moment divest thyself of sectarian prejudice, and suppose a professed minister of the blessed gospel of our Saviour, to rise in his pulpit and announce the above text: should then go on and denounce a large and respectable denomination of professing Christians as *drunkards, liars and thieves*, and exhort his hearers to shun them as they would the most deadly poison, would you, could you, think he was discharging his mission in all godliness and sincerity? We are compelled to regard it as a wide departure from the example of him whom they profess to follow, and would say to them, “*first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*” We have no ill will against Mr. Parker, for we recognize him as a brother, but we do wish him better feelings—those more consonant, in our estimation, with the acknowledged Christian character. We regard these fanatical and illiberal proceedings as destructive of the best interests of society, and we greatly fear he will be illy prepared to enjoy even that Heaven for which he is anxiously striving, without a radical change in disposition. Therefore, “*let all bitterness, &c. be put away from you; and be ye kind one toward another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.*” P.

#### HUDSON RIVER ASSOCIATION.

This body met at Albany on the 14th ultimo. Br. C. F. Le Fevre was appointed Moderator, and Brs. T. Fisk and Dolphus Skinner, Clerks. A letter of fellowship was conferred upon Br. L. G. Marvin; and the Universalist societies lately formed in Amsterdam and Duanesburg were also received into the connection. Among the more ordinary business, the following resolution was passed unanimously. “*Whereas, the Convention of the State of New-York, at the last session in May, 1831, passed resolutions relative to the establishment of a Literary Institution for the education of youth of both sexes—and where-*

*as, said resolutions have been approved by the sister Associations belonging to said Convention: Therefore, Resolved, that this Association will most heartily co-operate in recommending and carrying into effect the objects of said resolutions.*” Discourses were delivered to respectable audiences by the following brethren, and in the following order:—T. J. Sawyer, T. Fisk, D. Skinner, T. J. Whitcomb, I. D. Williamson and C. F. Le Fevre. Besides these, the following brethren were presented and took part in the exercises: Brs. R. O. Williams, Ammi Bond and L. C. Marvin. The Association adjourned to meet at Troy on the second Wednesday and Thursday of September, 1832.

The Stamford Sentinel of Sept. 12th gives, in substance, the following. A Mr. Stephen Miller, of New-Canaan, Ct. for many years a respectable member of the Congregational Church in North-Stamford, recently killed two of his children and nearly destroyed the life of his wife, while in a state of Religious phrenzy. It appears Mr. M. had previously attended two of these protracted meetings, so common now-a-days, and had returned home under strongly excited feelings. During a severe thunder storm on the evening of the 5th ult. he arose from bed and commenced beating his eldest child in a severe manner, as he said, “*to keep the devils off.*” On the mother's interfering he seized her, and beat and bruised her most shockingly. She succeeded in extricating herself and fled to the neighbors, almost lifeless. One of the children was afterward found about two rods from the house, awfully wounded in different parts of the body, and survived only a few hours. The other was discovered a corpse in the cellar, wretchedly mangled. Mr. Miller was secured and committed. He has since had a trial before the Supreme Court sitting at Danbury, and was acquitted on the ground of insanity.

It is seldom our attention is called to a more heart-rending train of circumstances than is presented in the above, and for the honor of human nature and the interests of pure and undefiled religion, we could hope that the advocates and promoters of those measures which evidently led to these results, would pause and reflect in their wild and fanatical career—would only for one moment contemplate the misery, suicides and insanity following in their train, and ask themselves seriously, “*can this be the fruit of pure and genuine religion*”—that religion which pours the oil and wine of joy and gladness into the heart of the mourner—binds up the broken spirit, and gives liberty to the captive. We doubt not the sincerity of numbers engaged in these measures; but should they cast one cool reflecting glance around, we should think they would stand appalled at the picture of devastation and ruin about them. Scarcely a week or day passes but accounts reach us of some new victim, some hapless mortal driven to despair and self-destruction, diffusing sorrow and distress, perhaps, through a large circle of connections. In the instance of the poor unfortunate *Father* (and how much is implied in that term) above named, where shall we limit the misery. He stands acquitted, it is true, and justly too, by the laws of his country, but who shall acquit him in moments of returning consciousness, of the heart-withering accusations of that tribunal within?—when reason again assumes her seat, and he looks round anxiously and eagerly for his loved little ones, and the conviction comes fearfully but surely on the mind, that he lives the destroyer of his own helpless offspring.

The following pertinent remarks, in allusion to the same subject, are from the “*Gospel Anchor*,” published at Troy.

“*When an accidental death happens to an individual who may have committed a breach of the*

Sabbath, the orthodox journals talk loud and long and hold up his example as a terror to evil doers. But when murder in its most aggravated forms, *infanticide and suicide* is the legitimate consequence of their breach of the Gospel of love, and the preachings of doctrines of fury and damnation, either profound silence is observed, or some futile excuses made to sanction a course of preaching and action that leads to these deplorable results. These remarks have been elicited by the case of the murder committed by Miller on his own defenceless offspring as found in the columns of our paper. How are the Universalists and other liberal Christians abused and calumniated, because they raise their voice against the unhallowed measures adopted by fanatics to gain proselytes to their doctrines of death. But in face of such facts as weekly meet our view, could we be justified in keeping silence? Surely, if *humanity* be a virtue, if philanthropy, benevolence and the happiness and peace of mankind are worthy objects of our regard, *then* are we called upon to cry aloud and spare not against proceedings which entail misery, torment and death on the human family.”

#### FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER. CONSOLATION OF RELIGION.

There are some aspects and situations in which Religion must command the respect and admiration of every honest mind and benevolent bosom; whether those of the sceptic or the believer. Surely we may adduce as a proof of this assertion, its influence over the couch of protracted and painful sickness, or on the bed of death. Nor does it at all affect the benignity and blessedness of that influence that it may be, by some, regarded as the dream of delusion, the pleasing phantasm of a groudless superstition—since the reality of the consolation bestowed on the believer admits of no dispute. How different, how obviously different, in scenes like these, are the characters of that which the infidel proudly terms his philosophy—and that which he contemns and despises—a sincere belief in the truths of Religion. At the best, philosophy can but teach them to *endure*, whilst religion enables them to triumph and rejoice. Cold and unsympathizing must be the heart of that man who (if he had the power,) could enter the chamber of sickness or approaching dissolution, and substitute doubt for belief—a cheerless anticipation of annihilation for a joyous looking forward—“*a sure and certain hope*” of immortality and bliss. Let it not be thought that in these remarks, we are compromising for the truth and foundation of Religion, by putting forward its beneficial results. We advance them with no such end in view; but, whilst others are combatting for the cause of its truth in “*the controversial field*,” it is our wish to show how little mankind would have to gain should an impossibility ensue; namely, that “*the gates of hell*,” should “*prevail against it.*” W.

#### READING, PENN.

The corner stone of a Universalist Church was laid in this flourishing town on the 12th of August last.

Many in this city, who have already subscribed, may not get this number of our paper, as early as we could have wished. A somewhat extensive list of names has been handed in, to serve our first number to, and the carrier will have to take the city in course, in delivering. As soon as the list becomes regulated, and the route in some degree familiar, subscribers will be served punctually. Those who have not subscribed, will be waited upon again, within a few days, by the person who delivers, for their name, should they feel disposed to encourage it.



FOR THE MESSENGER.

## WHAT IS FAITH?

"Firm on a rock, with elevated mind,  
Stands Faith, the comforter of human kind;  
For every earthly evil we endure,  
She points us out an everlasting cure."

Faith! 'tis a cheerful trust in Him,  
Whose slightest word can call,  
Whole nations from an unseen clime,  
Or bid earth's mountains fall.  
It is, when grievous ills arise,  
To pierce beyond this vale of sighs,  
And then with patient meekness tell  
Our God doth all things wisely, well.

Faith! 'tis the Christian's only rest,  
Amid the toils of life;  
It calms and soothes the troubled breast,  
And heals contentious strife.  
It is to taste, and feel and know,  
The joys of Heaven here below;  
It shows the risen Lord above,  
It tells us of a Father's love.

S. A. M.

We extract the following from an article in the last New-York Mirror, under the head of "INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A QUIET MAN," by N. P. Willis, Esq. one of its editors.

I went to college with but one very decided aversion—the smell of a sick room. With a sanguine temperament and high health, I had once been "laid up," for a winter with a lame knee, and the odors of a physician's appliances, never particularly agreeable, had become associated in my mind with confinement and pain, and every thing repulsive. I loved the open air with an eccentric affection. Sleeping under a tree, or encamping for the night in the shaft of a quarry, on my mineralizing excursion, were incidents I delighted in. To awake at any time and snuff the morning air gave me a thrill like a release from imprisonment. I lived out of doors. Accident made me a nurse. My most intimate friend fell ill, and with the caprice of a boy, would submit to no government but mine. I was under the necessity of administering all his medicines, and watching with him, and performing for him the thousand kind offices which the sick demand. He lay in my room a month, and one by one I insensibly overcame my aversions. The smell of ether and the close air and the sight of disgusting medicines had become at least endurable. The day he got out I was at a loss. Strange as it seemed to me, worn out, and weary, and impatient of it all as I had become, I wished him back again, making the same nervous complaints, and calling upon me for the same recurring services, and querulously refusing every other watcher. From this time I have had an unhealthy passion for scenes of this description. Like all other passions, too, it has sated itself with one degree of misery after another, till now nothing satisfies it but the deepest—death or wild insanity—whatever tries the sufferer most, and demands in the spectator most of sympathy and nerve. I think my heart was never hard, and I am sure that, instead of becoming indifferent to distress, it grows more sensibly alive by every repetition to sympathy and pity; but there is an excitement in the high-wrought circumstances which accompany sickness, which feeds in me a spring of curiosity, which, I cannot but think, is one of the deepest seated cravings of my nature. Men are no where without disguise but in a sick room. The character is no where else so tried, the weaknesses so uncovered, the fine godlike under-traits, which it is the way of the world to cover and keep down, disinterestedness and courage, and patience, no where else so irresistibly developed. I could never be deceived in a man I had nursed in sickness.

In a body of five or six hundred young men, many of them new to the climate, opportunities were not wanting to indulge such passion to its extent, and I soon became a desirable attendant from my skill and knowledge of the offices so necessary to the patient. I learned a thousand little assidues, and studied the slight but refreshing changes of position, and could dispose a pillow skilfully, and graduate the light pleasantly to the eye, and relieve, by many an unseen wile, the terrible monotony and weariness of disease. I had in my memory, too, stores of poetry and romance, and no one can tell, who has not been so attended, how grateful it is to a mind weary with feeding on itself, and crowded

upon with sickening images, to be stolen away by a winning narration to the land of fairy, and have the self-sated sympathies diverted to the light and shadow of the beautiful changes in a tale. How often have I by a touching story, drawn tears which I knew had in them more healing than medicine! It is easy, for the heart is tender in sickness; and no one can tell how pleasant it is, for, tears when the eyes are hot, and the brain iron-bound, as it seems to be, with the dryness of fever, exceed the freshness of water.

In the pursuit of such a passion I have naturally met with many distressing scenes, not only in sick rooms, but in all places where human nature is brought into extremity. There is here and there one in my memory, the singularity of which may possibly excuse the painfulness of narration.

I sat one cold night in January, watching with a senior who was insane. He was otherwise in perfect bodily health, but had been confined now a week with a periodical madness to which he was subject, and which was hereditary in his family. He was a man of powerful muscular frame, gentlemanly and full of spirit; and with the passionate gesture and the wild energy of expression in his dark eyes and fine countenance when the fit was on him, he was the handsomest creature I ever looked upon.

It was two o'clock in the morning. The moon shone bright out of doors, and the late noises in the college rooms had all ceased, and the night was as still as death. I was reading the Book of Martyrs. The chapel clock startled me as it struck two, and I rose from a harrowing description of impalement, and walked to the window to collect my nerves. The clear sparkling snow lay like fairy work over the beautiful common, and the trees, laden with the feathery crystals, looked like motionless phantoms in the moonlight. I could see down into the town, and far along the streets on either side of the common, and there was not a figure to darken the white side-walks, and I listened till my ear was pained with silence, and could not hear even a dog's bark. I turned from the window with an undefined feeling of dread, and looking at my patient, replenished the fire, and sat down again to my book. I had read perhaps half a page, when he rose suddenly in the bed, and pushing the long hair from his eyes, looked at me steadily. I thought he was dreaming. His mouth had a fixed curl of hatred, and the whole expression of his face was terrible. I sat still and looked him fixedly in the eye. His fingers were working like a man's who is feeling for a weapon, and he was drawing his feet almost imperceptibly under him, as if preparing for a spring. The unearthly fiendishness of his look at this moment is indescribable. The glare of the bright fire on his face, his tangled hair, his white night dress and the utter malignity of his set teeth and frowning brows, might have shaken stronger nerves than mine. I was convinced that the least motion on my part would be followed by an instantaneous spring; and in the hope of looking him down with the steadiness of my gaze, I sat as motionless as a statue, with my eyes still fixed upon him. The three or four minutes thus occupied gave me time to collect myself. I was slender, and by no means remarkable for my personal activity, and in the event of a struggle I knew I stood but little chance. I thought of shouting for assistance, but even if I had been heard by the sound sleepers in the rooms about me, such noises are too common in college to excite any thing but a curse on the rioter. I thought I would speak to him. In a quiet and pleasant tone I called him by his name, and asked him what he was going to do?

"Kill you!" was the brief answer.

"For what?"

"Because," said he, speaking with his teeth shut as he rose upon one knee, and grasped the pillow firmly, "I have found you alone, and I know you!"

The next moment he sprang into the middle of the floor, and with a stealth, and rapid tread, like a tiger's glided to the door, and locked it. I did not move from my position, except to place my feet in an attitude to rise instantly. He approached slowly, putting down one foot firmly after the other, as if to be certain that the floor was strong, until he stood close before me. The light-stand was between us, holding two candles and the large quarto from which I had been reading. I still kept my eyes on him without moving a muscle, and once or twice he quailed under my gaze, and looked aside. I was beginning to hope he would abandon his intention, when with a single motion of his arm, he swept away the stand, and sprang upon me. The violence of the shock overthrew me, and we fell to the floor. His knees were upon my breast and his fingers at my throat in an instant. For a minute I struggled hard to throw him

off, but with his powerful frame he sat as firmly as a rock, choking me nearly to strangulation with the closeness of his grasp. As a last hope I attempted to shout. Exhausted as I was, my feeble "help!" was scarce louder than a whisper, and I felt my eyes flash, and the blood crowd into my head with a terrible sense of suffocation. In the agony of the struggle I threw out my hand into the fire near which I had fallen, and, with an instinctive desperation, seized a handful of burning coals, and held them for a minute to his side. They burned through the night dress instantly, and he sprang to his feet with a curse, leaving me on the floor with scarce the power to move a limb. The next moment the tutor, who had been disturbed by the noise of my fall, burst into the room, and with a singular habit of obedience, the madman slunk to his bed, and covering up his head lay as quiet as a child till morning.

LORD HUNSDON.—A distinguished nobleman in the court of Queen Elizabeth, said, "To have the courage to notice an affront, is to be upon a level with an adversary; to have the charity to forgive it, is to be above him."

That man enjoys a heaven upon earth, whose mind moves in charity, rests in Providence, and turns upon the poles of truth and wisdom.

Notice to Correspondents.—S. J. H. & W. are received, and shall appear next week. Important questions, with remarks, by a Methodist clergyman, will also appear. The wishes of our friend in Dutchess county will be complied with.

NOTICE.—By the advice of several prominent friends, we take the liberty of requesting a meeting of the Universalists in this city, at the MILITARY HALL, Bowery, fronting Spring-street, on Thursday evening next, Nov. 3d, at 7 o'clock. It is earnestly desired that every one receiving this number, who feels an interest in the cause the paper espouses, would attend, to consult on the most efficient means of promoting its circulation in the city. It will require but little time of them, individually, and by this they can better understand the circumstances under which it is commenced, and feel greater confidence in encouraging it, if deemed worthy. Though we trust, from our course in view, that to the liberal Christian of every name, the paper will not be objectionable, yet we design it to be a UNIVERSALIST paper, and wish, if possible, to establish the necessary confidence to have it so considered by that order here. We ask them not for money, further than their regular subscriptions, but we do ask them for their good wishes towards it, and their interest in circulating it. With these, we feel confident in the result, and without them a paper cannot well flourish. On the circulation here, it must mainly rely, for the foreign support is ever uncertain.

October 29th, 1831.

## UNIVERSALIST BOOKS FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

Life of John Murray.  
Winchester's Dialogues.  
Petitiere on Divine Goodness.  
Ancient History of Universalism.  
Modern "do. do.  
Ballou on Atonement.  
do. Notes on the Parables.  
Universalist Expositor, Vol. 1. (bound.)  
Streeters' New Hymn Book, 3d and 4th Ed.  
Catechisms by Brs. Smith, Balch, Reese, and a Clergyman in Massachusetts.  
Ballou's Catechism.

We would respectfully request those of our friends who may be publishing, from time to time, Books and Pamphlets on the sentiment, to forward us supplies as early as convenient, as it is our purpose to keep as full an assortment as possible for the accommodation of friends in this section.

Messenger Office, Oct. 29.

All letters and communications relating to this paper, must be addressed "P. Price, No. 1, Chatham Square, New-York."

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